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AUTHOR	McKernan, Rose-Ann
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this report is to provide an initial set of indicators for the success of African American students in the Albuquerque, New Mexico, Public Schools (APS). The major data gathering activity was a survey of parents and students completed by 244 students and 251 parents. Parents and students presented a relatively positive picture of their schools. Both respondent groups believed that students were treated fairly in the schools and that they were safe in school. Both groups believed that teachers care about students, and that there is at least one staff member in whom a student might confide if there were a problem. Based on the percentage of district enrollment of African American students, they are under-represented in honors and enriched classes and in gifted education but over-represented in remedial special education. A higher percentage of African American high school students pass all six subtests of the competency examination than at the district or state levels. Based on the 1998 senior survey, Albuquerque African American students have a higher rate of acceptance into postsecondary institutions. The city's African American students have an average of 19 on the ACT college entrance examination; although this is still 2 points lower than the APS average, it is 2 points higher than the national average for African Americans. About 48% of African American students were eligible for free or reduced cost lunch, and those students eligible for free lunch scored lowest of all groups studied. High levels of success among junior and senior African American students, coupled with low early literacy rates and high dropout rates, pose a challenge for appropriate comparisons to other ethnic groups. The findings suggest that programs focused on at-risk African American students should include early literacy intervention and dropout intervention with staff cultural awareness training. An appendix contains enrollment and population figures for ethnic subgroups. (Contains 28 tables and 6 figures.) (SLD)

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ED 448 247

AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS IN APS

A SPECIAL REPORT PREPARED FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMUNITY COUNCIL ON EQUITY

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A REPORT IN SUPPORT OF GOALS 1 AND 3

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the request of the members of the Superintendent's Community Council on Equity, a study of African-American students was undertaken by RDA. The council posed several questions that served as a guide for the study. The major activity for the study was a survey of all African-American students and their parents. Parents and students present a relatively positive picture of their school. Both respondent groups believe students are treated fairly and students are safe. Parents and students believe that teachers care about students and that there is at least one staff member with whom they might confide if there were problems.

In addition to the survey, several other statistics were examined. The percentage of district enrollment for African-American students is used as the comparison figure. Using this comparison, African-American students are under-represented in honors and enriched classes and are enrolled in remedial special education at a higher rate than non-African-American students. Using the 3.4% figure of total African-American enrollment also leads to the conclusion that African-Americans are under-represented in gifted education.

A higher percentage of African-American high school students pass all six subtests of the competency exam than at the district level or at the state level. Based on the 1998 senior survey, African-American students have a higher rate of acceptance into post secondary institutions. About three-fourths of the seniors competing the senior survey had already received acceptance into a state post secondary institution or to an institution out-of-state.

African-American students have an average of 19 on the ACT college entrance exam, a score that is 2 points higher than the national average for African-Americans but still 2 points lower than the APS average. Another high school statistic compared was the dropout rate. The African-American dropout rate was 14.1% when the district rate was 11%

About 48% of all African-American students were eligible for free or reduced cost lunch. A statistic that may be used to predict the lower achievement on standardized tests. African-American students on free lunch scored among the lowest of all groups examined. Similar trends are found in the ITBS scores for students not participating in the free lunch program.

High levels of success among junior and senior African-American students, coupled with low early literacy rates and high dropout rates pose a challenge for appropriate comparisons to other ethnic groups. These statistics suggest programs focused on at-risk African-American students would necessarily include early literacy intervention ad dropout intervention with staff cultural awareness training. Tapping into the African-American parent community would provide a valuable resource in supporting African-American students. This could be especially helpful since parents expressed an interest in some form of a family center and parent support as well as offering support for district-wide efforts. This relationship would be mutually beneficial to students, parents and the district.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is provide an initial set of indicators for the success of African-American students in APS. This report presents a summary of information gathered through a survey of all African-American students in the district, a parent survey, and accountability statistics. Other information that was available by ethnic groups has been incorporated into this report. However, the main portion of the report focuses on the specific requests presented by the Superintendent's Community Council on Equity. No report or survey summaries are available to suggest that such an outreach with a specific ethnic focus has been undertaken in the district before. Therefore, there is very little against which to compare this information. However, the commitment of the council suggests that this is a first step towards establishing a baseline and ultimately goals for the success of African-American students in APS.

SURVEY

The members of the Superintendent's Community Council on Equity identified the need to have more information from African-America students and parents on their perceptions about schooling. To gather this information, the council and superintendent charged RDA with developing a format for the survey and completing the process

The concept presented to and approved by the council was to develop parent and student surveys that were accompanied by a newsletter providing information about the outreach process. The results of the survey would make up one part of a summary report on the status of African-American students.

The task force created by the council to coordinate the African-American project was to provide RDA staff information about issues to be addressed in the survey. The goal of the research staff was to gather the information for survey construction through a focus group process. The task force schedule prohibited their participation in the focus group but minimal written input was provided by the members. The final newsletter and surveys were accepted by the council.

The council and task force members helped to assure community awareness and support by enlisting local congregations and community groups to announce the survey and encourage participation. However, significant delay was encountered due to inaccurate listings of participants and incorrectly printed mailing labels.

Limitations

Every data collection process has limitations that must be taken into consideration when the results are reviewed. Survey research is no exception. The most obvious limitation is distribution. The survey was mailed to students' homes instead of being distributed at school to avoid making students feel singled out. However, the student information system has incorrect addresses as well as data entry errors for addresses. Although task force members volunteered to contact these families, this effort was not completed when this edition of the report was being completed.

Another limitation of surveys is the voluntary aspect of responses that may leave a particular group of students or parents completely unrepresented in the respondent group. The demographics of the respondent group suggest there is not a randomness to the selection and, therefore, generalization of the response is useful but with this caveat. However, it is important that the results from the respondents are not discredited as it is always appropriate to assume that there are others who hold these same beliefs but who did not respond.

Respondents

Over 3000 surveys were mailed to parents and students, this figure represents about 3.4% of the district enrollment. Whenever possible, surveys for family members were included in one packet. Seventy-eight surveys were returned undelivered either because of incomplete addresses or inaccurate addresses. Eighteen parents notified RDA that their children received surveys but are not African-American. A total of 495 surveys were returned for an estimated response rate of

approximately 8%. Of those surveys returned, 244 were from students and 251 from parents. Parents recieved one survey for every student in their household. However, some parents elected to respond on only one survey. In a few instances, parents attempted to respond for two or more chidren on one survey by indicating the grade levels for each child and marking more than one answer to an item. It was impossible to determine which markings were matched to which child. In these cases the responses were entered separatetly but the grade levels of the children were not recorded. To increase response rates, a second mail out is currently underway. Every household will receive a post card requesting return of the survey if it has not already been submitted.

Comparisons

Several items on the survey asked students and parents about the climate at their school. Respondents were presented a statement about climate and asked to note their agreement or disagreement. Some of these items are based on items from the Developmental Assets Survey of Search Institute.

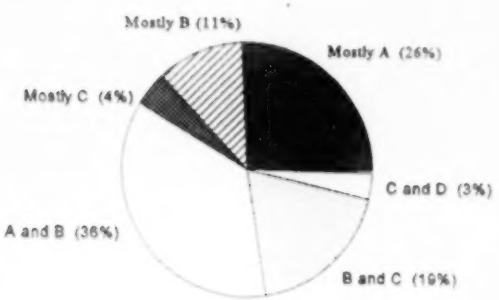
The Developmental Assets survey was administered to youths in grades 6-12 during 1996. Where possible, the African-American youths' responses are compared to these two surveys. However, three limitations must be considered. First, since the surveys were administered across three different time periods, differences in district climate may account for some differences in responses. Secondly, the full sample includes some African-American youth in the grades surveyed. Finally, the items are examined in isolation. Sometimes students will respond differently to items that are a part of a larger survey than when they answer those items as part of a single topic survey such as the African-American student survey administered for this study. However, the comparisons provide some reference points for the reader.

Third, eighth, and tenth graders returned the most surveys for the African-American outreach project. Third grade students accounted for 11.5% of the surveys, 11.9% were eighth graders and tenth graders contributed 10.6% of the responses. Slightly less than half (46.9%) are elementary students and 53% are secondary (6th-12th grades). Student respondents are fairly

evenly split between males (47.8%) and females (52.2%). Over half of the students report they earn grades of A or a mixture of A and B. Figure 1 shows the distribution of grades earned by respondents, demonstrating that this respondent group is not completely representative. Of the secondary respondents, 59% said they earned grades of mostly A and B.

These figures are comparable to the Assets survey respondents. Three percent of these respondents identified themselves as African-American and 58% said they earned grades of A or A and B. That makes this group comparable in academic performance according to their self report.

Figure 1- Grades of Respondents



About half the students say they are involved in sports either at school or outside of school, with the percent being involved out of school slightly higher. Students' participation in clubs and organizations at school or out of school is lower, with only about 40% saying they are involved. About 15% of the respondents said they were involved with an out-of-school group just for African-Americans.

Table 1 - Respondents Selecting Each Rating - All Students

	A Lot	Some	Not Much
I am involved in sports at my school.	28.2%	23.8%	48%
I am involved in clubs and other student groups at my school.	9.8%	31.1%	58.7%
I am involved in clubs and organizations outside of school such as YMCA/YWCA, Scouts.	21.2%	17.3%	61.5%
I am involved in clubs or organizations outside of school that are just for African-American youths.	5.1%	9.7%	85.2%
I am involved in sports outside of school.	33.2%	27.1%	39.7%

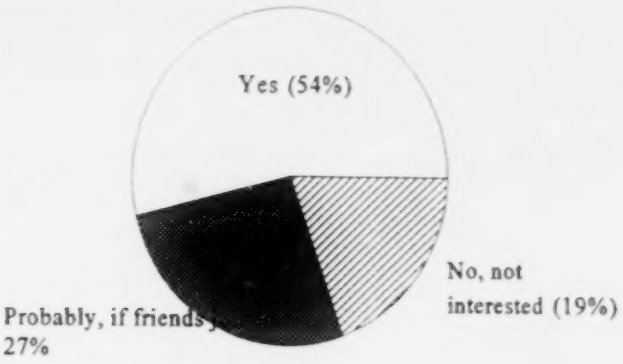
Only about 40% of the Assets respondents said they were involved in sports. About 25% were involved in school clubs and only 17% were involved in community clubs and organizations. Comparing these figures to the combined percentages of some to a lot of involvement, the African-American survey group tends to be slightly more active in sports and a great deal more active in clubs and organizations.

When African-American students were asked if they were involved in a club or organizations specifically for African-American youth, the majority said they were not (85%). Although students are not involved in these clubs, they were very interested. Over three-fourths of the respondents said they would join or conditionally join such a club or organization.

Students' Views of the School Climate

Generally, African-American students on this survey felt positively about their school as judged by the percent of agreement with positive statements about the school climate. About 70% believed that their teachers care about them and that they received encouragement at their school. About two-thirds feel that there was a staff member that they could talk with about school problems. On the Assets survey for APS, about 40% of the students said they believed their teachers cared about them and about the same number said they received lots of encouragement

Figure 2 - Students Interested in Clubs for African-Americans



at school. About 45% of the students on the assets survey said their teachers praised them when they did well.

Students' perceptions about fairness are somewhat positive. About half believe that all students at their school are treated fairly regardless of their race or ethnicity and two-thirds believe that they are treated fairly. They feel safe in their school and generally believe that students are safe. African-American student believe that their school mates do make friends without thinking about race or ethnicity but perceive themselves as stronger at doing so.

Students marked ways in which their parents help encourage them to be successful. Students reported the way that is least often used is parents reading with students or making sure that students have time to read. However, students frequently reported that their parents helped with homework, made sure students attended school and praised them for good grades. Table 2 shows the percent of students who marked that their parents used these techniques to support their child's educational pursuits. These response rates are slightly higher than those reported on the Assets survey in which about 63% said they had significant support from their family.

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Table 2 - Percent of Students Reporting Parents Support them by:	Students Reporting
Help me with my homework	84%
Make sure I go to school and that I am on time	95%
Make sure that I have friends who are a good influence on me	68%
Talk with my teachers, go to parent conferences	71%
Talk to me about what is going on at school	83%
Talk with me about what I plan to do after I finish high school	82%
Read with me and make sure I have time to read	37%
Praise me when I bring home good grades	87%
Go to school events like talent shows and performances, sports events	69%
Encourage me to join school clubs and other extra-curricular activities	71%

Students Responses by Item

Table 3 - Percent of Respondents	A Lot	Some	Not Much
I am involved in sports at my school.	28.2%	23.8%	48%
I am involved in clubs and other student groups at my school.	9.8%	31.1%	58.7%
I am involved in clubs and organizations outside of school (such as YMCA/YWCA, Scouts).	21.2%	17.3%	61.5%
I am involved in clubs or organizations outside of school that are just for African-American youths.	5.1%	9.7%	85.2%
I am involved in sports outside of school.	33.2%	27.1%	39.7%

Would you join a school club/group just for African-American students?
53.1% Yes, probably I would join
26.3% Probably if other friends joined
18.9% Probably not

Table 4 - Percent of Responses

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My teachers really care about me.	32.4%	36.6%	18.5%	5.5%	6.3%
It bothers me when I don't do something well.	38.5%	44.4%	7.5%	4.2%	4.6%
I get a lot of encouragement at my school.	23.9%	40.9%	14.3%	13.0%	7.4%
My parents encourage me to be the best I can be.	76.1%	21%	1.3%	1.7%	0%
There is a teacher or staff member I feel I can talk to about school problems.	29.7%	36.4%	14.4%	12.3%	7.3%
Students at my school are treated fairly regardless of their race or ethnicity.	21.3%	30.6%	21.3%	14.9%	14.9%
I think I am treated fairly regardless of my race or ethnicity.	28.2%	37.4%	13.0%	10.1%	11.3%
Students are safe at my school.	22.3%	39.9%	18.1%	12.2%	9.6%
As an African-American student at this school I feel safe.	22.8%	46.1%	17.2%	8.2%	5.6%
I feel that students in my school make friends without thinking about race or ethnicity.	31.8%	42.7%	12.6%	5.4%	7.5%
I make friends without thinking about race or ethnicity.	61.9%	35.6%	1.3%	1.3%	0%

Parent Responses

Parent responses about school climate vary a great deal but are generally positive. As many as 84% say they felt welcome at their child's school while as few as 36% say that students were treated fairly at the school. Almost 40% of the parents said they were unsure how children were treated.

Parents felt that their children's teachers cared about them and they felt welcome at the school. Over half of the parents said that there was a teacher or principal with whom they would be comfortable discussing issues of race and ethnicity. However, only about half said they believed that there was a staff member with whom their child felt comfortable talking to about school problems. Before drawing conclusions it is important to note that almost one-third of the parents were really unsure about their child having a staff member with whom to confide.

It is interesting to note that not quite half of the parents agreed that all children are safe at their child's school yet two-thirds believed that their African-American child is safe at school.

Table 5 - Parent Responses	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My child's teachers really care about my child.	30.9%	47.3%	13.6%	.%	2.5%
I feel comfortable discussing issues of race and ethnicity with my child's teachers and principal.	25.0%	36.7%	25.8%	7.1%	5.4%
I feel welcome at my child's school.	29.9%	54.4%	7.1%	6.6%	2.1%
My child gets a lot of encouragement at school.	25.8%	42.1%	14.6%	12.5%	4.6%
There is a teacher or staff member at school that my child would be comfortable talking to about school problems.	22.7%	35.7%	31.9%	5.9%	3.4%
All students at my child's school are treated fairly regardless of their race or ethnicity.	10.7%	26.3%	39.9%	13.2%	9.5%
I think my child is treated fairly regardless of his/her race or ethnicity.	14.0%	43.2%	20.6%	12.3%	9.5%
I feel all students at my child's school are safe.	9.1%	40.1%	25.6%	17.4%	7.9%
I feel my African-American child feels safe at school.	12.9%	49.6%	21.3%	9.2%	7.1%
I feel that students in my child's school make friends without thinking about race or ethnicity.	20.5%	46.7%	15.2%	9.8%	7.0%

Parents' indicators of the things that they do to support their children in succeeding in school are similar to those provided by the students. Again, reading with their child or making sure there is time to read was the least frequently noted support activity. Ensuring children are at school and they are on time and praising children for good grades were the most frequently identified activities. The listing in the next table shows what percent of parents identified each of these activities.

Table 6 - Parent Support Activities

Help my child with homework	88%
Make sure my child attends school regularly and is on time.	95%
Make sure that my child has friends who are a good influence.	84%
Talk with my child's teachers, go to parent conferences.	89%
Talk with my child about what is going on at school - at least once a week.	92%
Talk to my child about what he/she plans to do after finishing high school	79%
Read with my child and make sure that my child has time to read.	67%
Praise my child for good grades.	94%
Go to school events like talent shows and performances.	80%
Encourage my child to join school clubs and other extra-curricular activities.	72%

Comments From Surveys

Parents described a variety of ways they support their children in school. These suggestions can be grouped into three broad categories: personal values, parent reinforcement, and educationally related activities. Parents often wrote of teaching their child to be respectful and of ensuring their child is respected. Communicating with their children and communicating to their children that they are loved were important ways parents expressed their support. One unique form of support described by a parent was having contact with their child's friends and the friends' parents. Parents wrote of tangible rewards as well as social rewards for academic achievement, achievement in other areas, and for academic effort. Reading, having a variety of printed materials and educationally related activities and volunteering at school were other ways that parents found to support their child's educational process.

Parents were asked how school could be a more exciting and supportive place for children. Their responses addressed staff issues, social issues at school, instructional strategies, and extra-curricular activities. As would be expected, one parent's suggestion was another's criticism. For

example, one parent requested more clubs for African-American students and said a Black Student Union should be mandatory. Another parent said no special programs for ethnic groups should be offered. This parent's feelings were that these kinds of ethnic based programs fostered stereotypes and categorizing students.

Some common themes among the comments were evident. Parents want caring teachers who show respect for children and parents. They are concerned about insensitive and threatening discipline. They want more African-American teachers and more access to counselors. Parents want more communication with teachers and counselors, with one parent stating that when counselors discuss course offerings with students that parents should be present. Sensitivity training, training for substitute teachers, and training specific to working with African-American students, especially boys, was mentioned by many parents.

Extra-curricular activities were mentioned often. After school programs and centers were suggested and parents want some kind of transportation support so that their students may participate in the programs. Parents are concerned about safety before and after school. Specifically mentioned several times was the addition or expansion of sports, especially team sports, and art and music programs after school.

Parents want their children to have an opportunity to hear about career choices and to have exposure to practitioners in possible career fields. Hands-on instruction and a uniform grading system were other suggestions.

Parents expressed a need for programs that would focus on learning about and being respectful of all cultures. Their perceptions were that the current cultural education is too focused on one culture and should be expanded to recognize and celebrate the contribution from all cultures. Some study specific to African-American history was mentioned with a request that any such program go beyond slavery and address the contributions of African-Americans. Incorporating Black literature into existing courses and even offering Black Literature as a course was

suggested.

A few parents contacted RDA staff directly with the suggestion that a support center be established for parents of African-American students. The focus of the center should be support for parents in dealing with issues specific to African-American families and African-American students. Further, parents suggested another topic to address in such a center would be the unique aspects of multi-ethnic families and multi-ethnic children.

Finally, parents were concerned about the isolation that their children might face in being only one of a very few African-American children at a grade level or even in an entire school. One eloquently written letter on this issue addressed the dilemma of maintaining ethnic balance in classrooms while still attending to the learning needs of African-American children. This parent asked if her child's learning needs would take second place to the need to racially balance the classrooms. The parent stated that it was not her son's job to "integrate the school" and that for class placement decisions, she wanted his learning style and his educational needs to take precedence over all other considerations. While this concern was not mentioned frequently, when it was a parent comment, it was presented in a very compelling manner.

HONORS AND ADVANCED COURSE ENROLLMENT

APS offers three forms of advanced courses to high school students: enriched, honors, and advanced placement. Enrollment is typically by teacher recommendation or a combination of recommendation and objective measure.

During the 1997-98 school year, enrollment in all of these courses reached 16,004. African-American students generally accounted for 2.24% of all advanced course enrollment. This figure is about 1.26% less than total African-American secondary enrollment.

Enrollment patterns in advanced courses differ for African-American students. African-American representation in advanced social studies, language arts and science courses range from 2%-2.7%. African-American students enroll in advanced math courses at a lower rate (1.8%). This pattern is similar for advanced course enrollment for Hispanic students but is not seen among American Indian or Asian students.

Two percentages are provided to show African-American enrollment in enriched and advanced courses:

> The percent of students enrolled in advanced courses who are African-American. This figure is referred to as representation rates.
>
> The percent of African-American secondary enrollment that participates in advanced course preparation. This is referred to as participation rates.

Table 7 - Enriched, Honors, and Advanced Placement Enrollment

	African-American	
Course Area (Enrollment)	Representation	Participation
Social Studies (1494)	2.7%	4.7%
Language Arts (6717)	2.5%	19.0%
Math (3761)	1.8%	7.9%
Science (2037)	2.0%	4.7%
Languages (739)	1.9%	7.9%
Fine Arts (608)	2.0%	1.3%

NEW MEXICO HIGH SCHOOL COMPETENCY EXAMINATION

All students in New Mexico public schools must pass all six subtests of the High School Competency Exam (NMHSCE) to earn a diploma. The NMHSCE consists of five multiple choice subtests and a direct writing assessment. Students first take the exam upon achieving sophomore status. The typical reporting metric is the percent of tenth graders attempting and passing all six subtests.

The percent passing for the district is 92.5% and for the state is 88%. For African-American students in APS, 96.5% of the tenth graders took and passed the exam in January of 1998. The passing rate for tenth grade African-American students is slightly higher than the rate for other ethnicities.

SENIOR SURVEY

Students Perceptions of High School Experiences

Each year graduating seniors are asked to complete a survey which includes post secondary plans, an evaluation of their high school experience and some personal demographics. During 1998, 2914 students participated in the survey; of that 3.9% (112) identified themselves as African-American.

Students are asked to rate nine services/features of their high school. Students use the A to F grading scale for this rating. Cafeteria services and transportation received the lowest ratings by African-American and non-African-American students alike. Only 24% rated food services an A or B, and 33% rated transportation similarly.

Generally, African-American students rated the other services relatively highly. Between 42% and 64% gave ratings of A or B to the services. African-American students' ratings are listed in

Table 8 - Student Ratings of High School Services

	% of African-American students rating service as A or B
Guidance/Counseling	57%
Variety of Courses Offered	56%
Quality of Texts/Instructional Materials	42%
Sports Activities	64%
Student Organizations	59%
Safety of School	47%

Students are also asked to rate the quality of teaching they received over 12 areas. Students have the option to indicate they did not use or the area was not applicable to them. African-American students are fairly positive in their ratings. Table 9 shows the percent of African-American students rating the quality of teaching above average (A or B), average (c) or below average (D or F). The differences in total respondents is accounted for by students who did not rate the teaching.

Table 9 - Student Ratings of Quality of Teaching

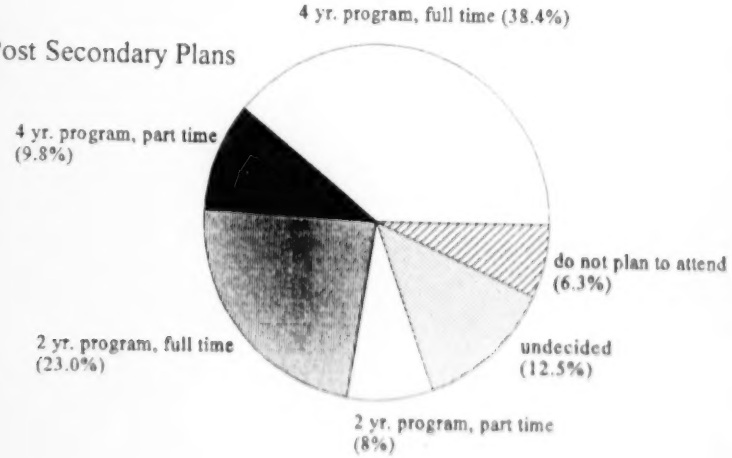
	A or B	C	D or F
Math	66%	17%	10.2%
Science	71.7%	16%	18.8%
Social Studies	70.1%	14.0%	5.6%
Language Arts	72.9%	11.2%	9.4%
Modern/Classical Languages	49%	5.8%	13.5%
Fine Arts	46.6%	11.4%	8.6%

	A or B	C	D or F
Vocational Ed.	52.9%	11.5%	7.7%
Computer Science	48.1%	57.7%	10.5%
Health Education	57.7%	20.2%	7.6%
Physical Education	64.5%	18.3%	6.7%
Special Academic Programs (Honors, etc.)	39%	10.7%	16.6%
Special School (CEC, TVI, UNM)	38.9%	7.8%	7.8%

Post Secondary Plans of African-American Seniors

Published research shows that articulated plans are predictors of whether a student continues his/her education. Of the African-American students responding to the Senior survey, 62% plan to attend some post-secondary program on a full-time basis. Another 18% plan to attend school part-time, while only 6.3% said they planned no further education. Twice that number were undecided. Of the students planning to continued their education, 62% plan to work and to go school.

Figure 3- Post Secondary Plans


4 yr. program, full time (38.4%)
4 yr. program, part time (9.8%)
do not plan to attend (6.3%)
undecided (12.5%)
2 yr. program, full time (23.0%)
2 yr. program, part time (8%)

Of the students planning for post-secondary programs, 11.6% had applied for and received academic scholarships. Another 8% had received athletic scholarships. Almost 9% of the students had applied for academic or athletic scholarships and were awaiting notification.

The majority of African-American students participating in the Senior survey plan to attend post-secondary programs in Albuquerque. Table 10 shows the percent of students who had already been accepted at post-secondary institutions. This group represents 76% of the total respondent group.

Table 10 - Post Secondary Institutions Awarding Acceptance

Eastern New Mexico State	7.1%
Highlands University	2.4%
New Mexico State University	7.1%
New Mexico Tech.	2.4%
University of New Mexico	42.0%
Albuquerque Technical-Vocational Institute	20.0%
other New Mexico institutions	2.4%
out-of-state institutions	16.5%

AFRICAN-AMERICAN PERFORMANCE ON COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

College entrance exams are designed to measure academic achievement, predict success in college, and help students understand their potential to do college work. These exams are not designed to evaluate high school curriculum. The two most common exams are the ACT and the SAT. Since all New Mexico colleges accept the ACT, the majority of college bound APS students take this test. Those with plans to attend college out of state often take the SAT.

A total of 2,452 students took the ACT in 1997. Only 475 students elected to take the SAT. A higher percentage of minority students for APS participated in the 1996-97 ACT than did at the

national level. In APS, 39% of the participants identified themselves as members of a minority ethnicity, Nationally, only 19% of the ACT test-takers identified themselves as a minority ethnicity. The APS minority participation in the SAT is comparable to the national; in APS and across the country 29% of SAT participants claim a minority ethnicity. African-American students made up 3% of the students taking the ACT in APS. A total of 16 African-American students took the SAT making up 3.4% of the students taking this test. This percentage compares favorable with the percentage of African-American enrollment in high schools across the district.

The ACT allows for scores from 1 to 36. During 1997, the national average for all students was 21. At the state level, students scored 20.3 and the APS average for the ACT was 21.4, above both the state and national average. The average for African-American APS students was 19, two points below the national average. Nationally, the average ACT score for African-Americans was 17, two points below APS African-American students.

The SAT has two subtests: verbal and math. Scores range from 200 to 800 on each subtest with an average of 500 on each. During 1997, APS students scored higher than both the national and state averages. The APS average was 559 on the verbal. The state average was 554 and the national average was 505 for the verbal. APS African-American students averaged 466 verbal. The national average for African-American students on the SAT verbal is 434.

The SAT math subtest scores showed similar patterns. The APS average was 560. The state average SAT math score was 545 and the national average was 511. African-American students in APS averaged 442 and the national average for African-American students was slightly lower at 423.

STUDENT OUTCOME MEASURES

Achievement Performance

For over 15 years, RDA has evaluated the correlation between poverty and achievement. During that time the connection between achievement and several other demographic variables was assessed. This study confirmed that multiple measures of income for both family and community remain the strongest predictors of performance on achievement tests. These studies and the literature confirming these findings lead RDA to examine the differences in performance on achievement tests when these results were examined for different ethnicities within large income measures. That is, how do students of different ethnicities perform when compared to others with similar incomes?

This comparison in APS is an important one because of the disproportionate representation of minority children in the free and reduced cost lunch program. Table 11 shows the comparisons of poverty (as defined by lunch program eligibility) for the different ethnic groups within APS.

Table 11 - Percent of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Cost Lunch

Ethnicity	Percent Poverty
Anglo	17.7
Black	48.1
Hispanic	53.7
American Indian	52.1
Asian	36.8
Other	30.1

This demographic variable (poverty) is used to display the results of the achievement tests administered in 1997. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) was administered to students in

grades three, five, and eight. For this norm-referenced test the national average is the 50th percentile represented by the 50th NCE score. Tables 12-13 show these results; however, four points are important to consider: (1) The percent of participation in achievement testing by ethnic groups is not available. (2) Significant differences exist in the number of students in each ethnic group. For example 1,625 students are included in averages for Hispanic students and only 43 for Asian. (3) The income measure is a self-report. Statistics show that free/reduced cost lunch applications decrease dramatically at secondary levels. (4) Free/reduced cost lunch eligibility data are not uniformly available across all schools.

Table 12 - Average NCEs for ITBS **Students Eligible for Free Lunch**

	GRADE THREE			GRADE FIVE			GRADE EIGHT		
	Reading	Language	Math	Reading	Language	Math	Reading	Language	Math
Anglo	49.6	48.8	50.7	50.2	47.6	47.9	48.3	48.9	46.9
African-American	38.6	38.3	36.9	41.4	41.4	40.8	34.3	43.3	40.9
Hispanic	37.6	38.9	41	39.6	39.0	40.2	37.9	37.5	37.6
Asian	41.2	50.3	53.1	41.5	50.1	52.5	28.8	36.2	46.9
American Indian	36	41.5	41.4	37.5	37.5	39.3	37.2	37.5	33.7
Other	44.1	51	54.6	46.2	42.6	43.2	40.7	45	41.8

Table 13 - Average NCEs for ITBS **Students NOT Eligible** for Free Lunch

	GRADE THREE			GRADE FIVE			GRADE EIGHT		
	Reading	Language	Math	Reading	Language	Math	Reading	Language	Math
Anglo	62.0	60.2	62.1	61.5	59.7	60.0	59.9	60.1	58.6
African-American	48.5	49.6	48.9	489	46.5	44.5	44.9	47.3	43.7
Hispanic	50.5	51.5	52.9	50.2	48.8	47.9	43.5	44.6	43.9
Asian	56.7	64.1	63.2	56.3	59.8	60.6	51.3	59	59.3
American Indian	45.5	49.9	50.1	42.9	45.7	43.2	44	45.2	43.6
Other	57.6	62.1	63.9	55	55.9	56.9	49.4	56.3	58.7

DROPOUT

The annual dropout rate is an assessment of the impact of prevention and retrieval programs. Annual rates are useful for trend analysis and are helpful in interpreting cohort and longitudinal data. The 1996-97 annual dropout rate for APS 9th-12th grades is 10.75%. Dropout rates by ethnicity were published for the district. At some schools only a very few students from particular ethnic groups are enrolled. Reporting school dropout rates for this small a number is inappropriate. Table 14 presents dropout rates for different ethnic groups.

Table 14 - Dropout Rates by Ethnicity

	Anglo	African-American	Hispanic	Native American	Asian	Other
% dropping out	8.21%	14.08%	11.90%	18.68%	9.39%	18.71%
% district enrollment	44%	4%	46%	4%	2%	1%

AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Referral and placement statistics from school year 1996-97 and enrollments for December 1, 1997, were examined to address the questions posed by the Council regarding African-American students' participation rates in special education. The December 1 count is considered the reportable figure as it is the official state report date.

Initial Referrals

During 1996-97 school year 4,166 initial referrals were made for consideration for special education services. This referral figure includes the 826 students referred for gifted program eligibility and eventual placement.

Of these 3,340 referrals for remedial special education, 4.9% were African-American students (164 students). Of these African-American students, 22% were determined not to require special education services and 78% were referred for placement in remedial special education programs. This referral rate is higher than enrollment rates for African-American students.

Enrollment in Special Education

Figures for the 1997 special education enrollment were examined for participation rates. On the December 1st special education count, 18,026 students were receiving remedial and gifted education services in special education. If gifted students are removed and only remedial special education placements are considered, the district provided services to 14,309 students, representing 16.1% of the forty-day enrollment. African-Americans make up 5% of the special education students and have a placement rate of 22% of their total enrollment. This is compared to a 15.9% placement rate for all other students. The remedial special education rates for African-American students exceeds the enrollment rate and exceeds the placement rate for all other students.

While the top three diagnostic categories are the same for African-American and non African-American children, the distribution differs. Speech and language disorders account for the largest

category of special education students, whether African-American or not. Diagnoses among African-American and non African-American special education students differ for the second most frequent category. Over 12% of African-American special education students are identified as severe emotional/behavioral disorders while 7.3% non African-American students carry such exceptionality. Specific learning disabilities accounts for 9.7% of African-American special education students and 11.9% of others.

Gifted special education placement among African-American and non African-American students show greater differences. African-American students account for 7.1% of all students in gifted education and 21.2% of all others. Using 1997 enrollment figures, 1.7% of African-American students are enrolled in the gifted programs. For non African-American students, 2.7% are placed in gifted programs, a markedly higher rate than for African-American students especially when it is considered that the 2.7% includes other minority students.

STAFFING

In addition to student and parent information, the council requested employee information. The request was for distributions of employees by reported ethnicity. The follow table presents these data by job category. The employee category with the highest African-American representation is educational assistants. Counselors, administrators, and custodians have the next highest representation rates . Parents comments about visibility of African-American teachers possibly is explained by the small percentage of African-American teachers compared to African-American representation in other job categories.

Table 15 - African-American Representation in Employee Categories

Job Category	% of African-American Employees
Educational Assistants	3.26%
Counselors	2.87%
Administrators	2.50%
Custodians	2.47%
Teachers	1.50%
Cafeteria Workers	1.06%
Clerical	0.96%

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A very small number of surveys were returned in comparison to the enrollment of African-American students (495 surveys compared to over 3000 students). Therefore, it is important that the summary and the recommendations be considered with this significant limitation. It is likely that many of the responding parents are those who feel most attached and engaged with their children's schools and are the most engaged with their children's education. It is also likely that students experiencing the most difficulty in school and those students' parents did not feel engaged enough to return completed surveys. This hypothesized response pattern may account for the generally positive responses.

Among those who responded, generally students and parents are satisfied with their school. However, parents had some very pointed complaints about cultural sensitivity, racial slurs towards children, and the lack of Black Studies for secondary students.

Of the 244 responding students, the majority felt teachers cared about them and treated them and others fairly. Over three-fourths of the students who responded are interested in a school club or group specifically for African-Americans.

Of the 251 parents who responded, they generally feel welcome at their children's school and are comfortable discussion issues of race and ethnicity with at least one school staff. They, like most parents, expressed more satisfaction with their own child's school than with schools in general.

Evaluating data from sources other than the survey, African-American secondary students perform as well as or better than comparison groups in high school competency exams, college entrance exams and college acceptance. However, the African-American dropout rate is significantly higher than the district and standardized measures of literacy in the early grades reveal low levels of achievement at these grades.

The high dropout rates and poor achievement go hand in hand to create a student population at risk for failure early in the school career. Interventions that address literacy improvement could impact both the standardized achievement test results and the dropout rates.

Parents who responded to the survey also express concerns about the isolation of their children and note that certain policies about class placement may even exacerbate this isolation. Responding parents are eager to assist the district in efforts towards enhancing teacher and school staff awareness of cultural issues for African-American students and would like to see a broadening of cultural awareness efforts at all APS schools. Finally, parents express a need to have a way to connect with each other in the context of helping their children experience success in their educational program. Parent forums and even a parent center were recommended.

Finally, the return rates for the survey were not as high as expected based on rates for other mail out surveys. Certain data integrity issues about the identification of African-American students and student addresses had a significant impact on the efforts to conduct this outreach. District efforts to correctly identify students' ethnicity are underway and should continue throughout the next school year. Additionally a second notification regarding the return of the survey should be distributed in an effort to achieve a more representative respondent group.

Appendix A

Enrollment and Population figures
for ethnic groups

Foreword

The purpose of this report is to provide facts and statistics regarding the many facets of the educational process in the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS). This report, published by the Research, Development and Accountability (RDA) Department, presents several types of information and will serve different purposes for different readers. It includes statistical data regarding the operation of schools and programs, information about the community from which APS draws its students, the students themselves, the personnel who work with them, and the outcomes of the educational process. However, statistical data are only one part of the description of APS.

Statistics cannot describe interactions between students and teachers or between the community and APS. They do not present cause and effect links. They provide information about trends over time and can serve as signposts for problems and possible solutions. These statistics can provide a source of data to assess the impact of policies and procedures across the district. They also describe APS as a constantly changing and evolving district serving a multitude of purposes. It is hoped that this overview of education in APS will provide the reader with a comprehensive look at APS, pointing out both areas of success and those in need of change.

The Albuquerque Public Schools

The Albuquerque Public Schools opened its doors in 1891 in the Perkins Hall Building located at the northwest corner of Edith and Central. The enrollment was 30, with a graduating class in 1892 of 3 students. That same year construction began on four "ward" schools to serve the four quadrants of town. They would be located at Edith and Tijeras, Edith and Highland, Huning Avenue between Fourth and Fifth, and Fruit and Sixth. These schools were completed in 1893, and in 1900 the Central School was built at Lead and Third to house grades 7-12. In 1914 students and employees at the Central School were moved to a new, permanent location in the Albuquerque High School at the corner of Broadway and Central, where it still stands today, although it is no longer an APS building.

APS is unique in the state of New Mexico, as it is the largest public school district in the state as well as the state's largest employer. APS is the 26th largest school district in the United States, serving 88,886 students with 11,000 employees during the 1996-97 school year. APS boundaries encompass over 1,200 square miles within Bernalillo and Sandoval Counties with over 120 buildings and 11 million square feet of classroom and office space. APS has opened ten new schools in the past ten years, including two middle schools and eight elementary schools. Two of those elementaries were subsequently absorbed into the Rio Rancho Public School District. Another new elementary school is scheduled to open next year.

Obviously, APS has experienced tremendous growth in size and space over the past 104 years, but its commitment to students has not wavered. The APS Mission Statement reads:

Albuquerque Public Schools in collaboration with the community provides quality education which prepares all students to become contributing members of a diverse, changing world.

The Vision Statement for APS describes the schools as a center for the community of learners, where students, parents, teachers, other staff and community members are learning the essential knowledge and skills to ensure success in the future. The District's goals for the 1996-97 school year included:

1. Involve the community in setting priorities for instructional improvement.
2. Improve student achievement in literacy in every classroom.
3. Extend the use of information and technology to improve teaching and learning.
4. Implement a comprehensive school-to-careers system.
5. Strengthen character education initiatives throughout the APS learning community.
6. Design and provide professional development activities aligned with district priorities.
7. Implement a unified, integrated education system.
8. Implement a fine arts program, including music, visual art, dance and drama.
9. Provide district facilities that enhance the environment for teaching and learning.
10. Improve district and school operations through effective and efficient management practices in support of a quality education system.

APS Enrollment and Attendance Area Population

The APS district serves children in and around the metropolitan Albuquerque area, covering parts of Bernalillo and Sandoval counties. According to the 1990 US Census, 101,249 school-aged children (5-18 years) reside within this area. Census figures indicate another 40,115 children age 4 and under reside in the APS attendance area. School age or near school age children make up approximately 23% of all residents. The census data show that 37% of all households in the area have children in them. Table 1 shows the distribution of residents by age groups. Confining school age to 5-18 years old, approximately 12% (10,811) of the school age residents were not enrolled in APS on the 40th day. These students were enrolled in private and parochial schools, attend special state operated schools, or participate in home schooling.

Table 1 - APS Area Residents by Age

Age in Years	Under 3	3-4	5	6-9	10-14	15-18	19-64	65+
% population	4.5%	3.2%	1.6%	6%	7%	5%	62%	11%

Every 20 days the district produces a report that provides enrollment figures for each school in the district. While a variety of enrollment and population figures are available, this 20 day count provides the official enrollment figures for all APS educational programs on one specific day (at 20 day intervals). The figure for the second 20 day period, the 40 day count, is often reported as an official count because it has been used by the State Department of

Education and other agencies for funding purposes. Because students enroll and withdraw throughout the year, no particular 20 day enrollment will provide a cumulative count of all of the students served during a school year. While the cumulative enrollment indicates a total of 92,433 students enrolling in APS, on the 40th day of 1996-97 school year, APS records show that 88,891 students were enrolled in district schools and programs. Figure 1 shows the distribution of the APS enrollment on the 40th day of 1996-97.

Ethnic and Racial Demographics

APS typically reports enrollment by six ethnic categories: American Indian, Anglo, Asian, Black, Hispanic, and Other. Since school year 1992-93, students have been able to identify and report two ethnic/racial affiliations: primary and secondary. Only the primary ethnicity is used for reporting purposes. Comparisons of enrollment with the 1990 Census data are not appropriate because the census survey reports race separate from ethnicity. However, Figures 2 and 3 show ethnic and racial distributions across the student and resident populations.

Languages Spoken in the Home

The US Census figures indicate that about 3% of residents in the APS attendance area between the ages of 5 and 17 years do not speak English well (classification used on the 1990 Census). US Census information regarding home languages and English proficiency is presented in Figures 4 and 5.

Under a mandate from the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), APS has developed a process to identify students in need of alternative language services. The first level of identification of those students is part of the registration process for all students. At registration, parents/guardians or other responsible adults identify the language commonly spoken in the home, the student's first language and primary language, and whether or not the child speaks or understands a language other than English. Over 28,000 reported a primary or home language other than English. This home language survey information is entered into the district's enrollment information for each child. All students who indicate that they speak or understand a language other than English are identified as PHLOTE (Primary Home Language other than English) students, and are assessed for alternative language service. The district-supported instrument for English language proficiency is the Language Assessment Scales (LAS). APS follows the test developer's guidelines in identifying students as Non-English Proficient (NEP) and Limited English Proficient (LEP) for all students identified as PHLOTE. The number of students identified as LEP as of the 1996-97 school year is 15,933.

Other Information about the Community

The 1990 U.S. Census reports 73,059 *households* with children in the APS attendance area. Approximately 30% are headed by a single-parent (or parent figure); 8% are headed by men and the remaining 22% have a female single head of household. The average household size for all families is 2.56 persons. The Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments reports an increase in population for the city of Albuquerque from approximately 388,000 in 1990 to

Figure 1 - APS Enrollment, 1996-97

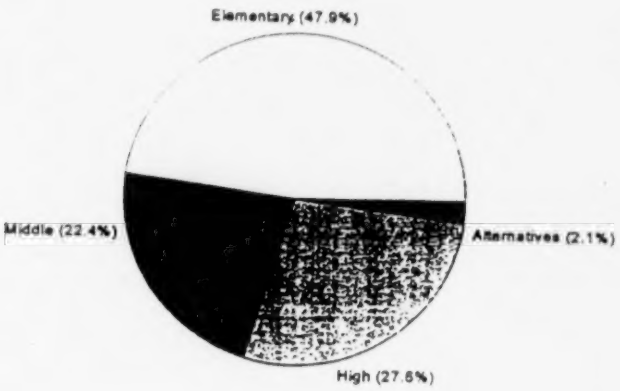


Figure 2 - Enrollment by Ethnicity, 1996-97

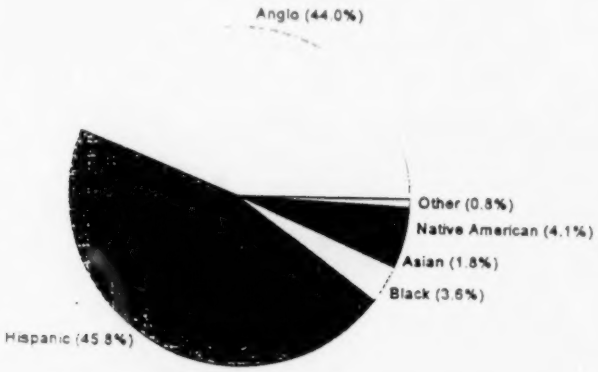
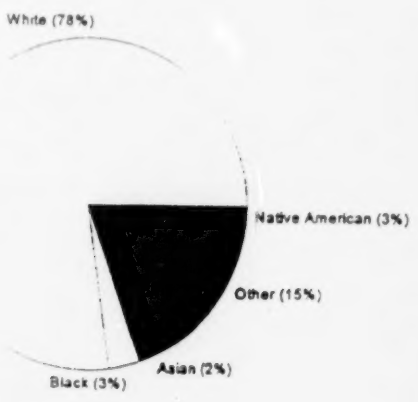


Figure 3 - Community Racial Composition
(36% of all residents identify themselves as Hispanic)



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Appendix B

Enrollment in Mathematics Classes

By Ethnic Groups

Course	Title	Anglo	African-American Black	Hispanic	American Indian	Asian	Other
01222	Math Basic	3	2	6	3		
01235	Algebra I	4		5			
01263	Pre-Algebra	6		8	2	1	
062C1	Algebra I	3		1			
062C2	Algebra II	5	1				
062C8	Foundations for Algebra	9	1	21	1		
31020	Pre-Algebra	418	42	622	85	18	4
31021	Pre Algebra	11	1	77	3		
31027	Pre-Algebra	10	3	27	9	1	
31028	Pre-Algebra ESL	1		38			
3102A	Pre-Algebra Bilingual	1	1	63			
3102N	Pre-Algebra Sem 1	2	1	4	2		
3102P	Pre-Algebra Sem 2	3	1	5	2		
3102Y	Pre-Algebra YDI	3	2	68	4	1	
31050	Algebra 1A	271	75	735	114	14	4
31057	Algebra 1A	38	7	97	13	5	
3105A	Algebra IA Bilingual			58			2
3105N	Algebra IA Sem 1	2		7	2	1	
3105P	Algebra 1A Sem 2	3		8	2	1	
3105Y	Algebra 1A YDI	6	2	55			
32030	Applied Pre Algebra	6	2	48			
32032	Applied Algebra	3	2	33	6		
33020	Algebra IB	239	45	645	52	8	2
3302A	Algebra IB Binlingual		2	68			
33040	Algebra I	937	101	1004	111	41	14
33041	Algebra I	159	3	51	9	4	1
33047	Algebra I (Special scheduling)	39	2	6	2		1

33048	Algebra I (Special scheduling)	3					
3304A	Algebra I Bilingual	4	1	38	2	1	
3304P	Algebra I Sem 2	1	1	10			
33060	Algebra Enriched	35	1	11		3	
33080	Honors Algebra I	196	12	100	9	12	3
36060	Algebra II Enriched	113	6	61		7	2
36080	Honors Algebrall/Trig	224	5	64	6	19	5
38010	Transition to College Math	39	5	25	1	2	
TOTALS		2,797	328	4000	444	118	38

Appendix C
Senior Survey Results
1997-98

1998 Senior Survey Results for Albuquerque Public School District

Each spring the Research, Development and Accountability (RDA) Department of the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) conducts a senior survey of all students preparing to graduate. The data gathered include information regarding the demographic composition of the graduates, the future educational and career aspirations of the graduates and other information about activities and academic programs available to the graduates at the school they attended.

The 1998 senior survey was distributed to 4765 seniors; 3293 were returned for a **response rate of 69.1%.** About 55.3% of the respondents were female and 44.7% were male. Approximately 14% indicated they had to attend summer school or evening school to earn enough credits to graduate.

The following tables show the answers to specific questions regarding senior survey participants' high school program.

1. How long have you attended this high school?

# Years	District	
	Number	Percent
1 year or less	215	7.4
2 years	257	8.9
3 years	274	9.4
4 years	2090	72.1
4+ years	64	2.2

2. How many years including this one has it taken you to complete high school?

# Years	District	
	Number	Percent
less than 3	42	1.5
3 years	89	3.1
4 years	2411	83.5
5 years	290	10.0
5+ years	57	2.0

7. If you have already been accepted to a school that you are going to attend, it is:

	District	
	Number	Percent
Eastern New Mexico University	78	3.8
New Mexico Highlands University	35	1.7
New Mexico State University	187	9.1
New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology	44	2.2
University of New Mexico	825	40.3
Western New Mexico University	14	0.7
Albuq. Technical-Vocational Institute (T-VI)	465	22.7
other New Mexico school	62	3.0
out-of-State school	335	16.4

8. In which of the following activities did you particpate during any of your high school years?

	District	
	Number	Percent
Athletics/Drill/Cheer	1274	48.3
Band/Orchestra/Chorus	569	22.3
Student Government	434	17.1
Student Publications (yearbook, newspaper, etc.)	413	16.3
Clubs (drama, speech, etc.)	1048	40.6
Career preparation groups/clubs (DECA, FA, FFA, etc.)	799	31.1

9. Approximately 35% of the students answering this survey indicated they did not make use of the services available through their high school counseling office. For the 65% who did, the following table shows the percentages of students using specific counseling services.

	District	
	Number	Percent
selecting high school courses, graduation information	1575	80.5
college selection	943	49.3
taking college entrance exams	938	49.4
scholarships/financial aid (applying, recommendations)	1111	58.6
vocational guidance/career selection	658	34.8

Students were asked their opinions regarding the importance of school, problems in their high school, learning methods and parental involvement. The following tables indicate these results.

11. How close are each of these statements to the way you feel?

	very close	some-what close	not close
People who are highly educated get a lot of respect in our society.	46.0	44.6	9.4
How well I did in high school will have an impact on how well I do in the future.	38.4	43.9	17.7
It's important for me to do well in school so I can get into college.	63.1	29.1	7.8
I could have done better in my classes, but I would have had to give up too many things I enjoy doing.	38.2	36.9	24.9
I won't really need to know most of the things my school is teaching when I get out into the real world.	17.9	45.1	37.0

12. These four things could decide how well you do in a job or career. Rank these items from 1 to 4 where 1 is the most important and 4 is the least important.

	1	2	3	4
Getting an excellent academic education	47.3	26.7	14.8	11.2
Having inner drive and not giving up	54.1	24.8	13.3	7.9
Knowing how to deal with people well	34.7	25.0	29.1	11.2
Knowing the right poeple and having the right connections	24.8	16.0	16.2	43.0

13. Here are some problems different schools could have. Rate how serious these problems were in your school where 1 is very serious and 4 is not a problem.

	1	2	3	4
Too many disruptive students	18.6	36.8	35.1	9.4
Too much violence and drugs in school	17.9	28.3	35.2	18.6
Classes are too crowded.	21.5	32.5	30.4	15.7
Academic standards are too low and students are not expected to learn.	24.4	30.1	26.1	19.4
Too many students get away with being late to class and not doing the work.	20.4	24.5	29.0	26.1
Students don't have to be at school and nothing happens when you ditch.	20.8	27.1	25.8	26.3

14. Would the following methods actually help students learn more?

	Yes	No
Getting your class work checked and redoing it until it's right.	71.0	29.0
Doing a job internship for school credit.	75.7	24.3
Knowing that more companies in your area are using high school transcripts to decide who to hire.	65.6	34.4
Making sure students are on time and complete their work.	72.6	27.4
Passing students to the next grade only when they learn everything they are supposed to learn.	63.9	36.1
Requiring after-school classes for students who get Ds and Fs in required subjects.	62.4	37.6
Making parents responsible for student behavior by requiring them to come to school to meet with staff.	49.5	50.5
Permanently removing from school students caught with drugs or weapons.	55.9	44.1

15. If it were harder to earn a passing score on the New Mexico High School Competency Exam to you think:

	Yes	No
most students would pay more attention to their school work and study harder	48.8	51.2
more students would drop out of school	45.0	55.0

16. Please answer the following items about your parents involvement in your school activities.

	Yes	No
Do your parents or guardians always know how you're doing in your classes?	55.8	44.2
Do your parents or guardians usually ask what you're studying in your courses?	63.6	36.4
Do you think parents or guardians would be very disappointed if you do not go to college?	73.5	26.5
Do your parents or guardians pressure you to get good grades?	64.1	35.9
Do your parents or guardians usually attend school meetings?	29.7	70.3
Do your parents or guardians know the name of your favorite teacher?	54.8	45.2

17. What is the lowest grade in school that your parents would accept before getting upset or imposing consequences?

	District	
	Number	Percent
A	106	3.9
B	316	11.7
C	1069	39.7
D	664	24.6
F	200	7.4
never impose consequences	341	12.6